

Message Text

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NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NATO 07780

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO

SUBJECT: NATO EXERCISE PROGRAM

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REF: USNATO 7342 DTG 291506Z

SUMMARY: THE US HAS CONSISTENTLY ADVOCATED AN ACTIVE NATO HEADQUARTERS EXERCISE PROGRAM, AND IN THIS MESSAGE, WE PROPOSE SEVERAL STEPS WHICH SHOULD CONSERVE OUR PAST GAINS AND FACILITATE FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE ENDEAVORED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS TO ENSURE THAT NATO HEADQUARTERS MAINTAINS A VIABLE, ENERGETIC EXERCISE PROGRAM, DESPITE PERSISTENT EFFORTS BY SOME OF OUR ALLIES TO CURTAIL THE PROGRAM. US SUCCESSES HAVE BEEN MANIFEST IN THE RETENTION OF HILEX-8 AND THE GO-AHEAD FOR WINTEX/CIMEX 79. ALSO THERE WILL BE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN EACH OF THE EXERCISE SERIES: E.G., AN ORANGE RESPONSE CELL AND EXPANDED RESOURCES PLAY ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN HILEX-8; AND WE SHALL SEE GREATLY EXPANDED CIVIL EMERGENCY PLANNING (CEP) PLAY (INCLUDING REINFORCEMENT PLAY) IN WINTEX/CIMEX 79.

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2. ALTHOUGH THE US CANNOT CLAIM TO HAVE INITIATED ALL SUCH INNOVATIONS, WE HAVE BEEN THE DECIDED LEADER IN ACHIEVING AGREEMENT TO TRY NEW PROPOSALS. THUS, MANY OF OUR ALLIES WILL BE LOOKING TO THE US FOR CONTINUING INTEREST, INNOVATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. (E.G., OUR OFFER TO PROVIDE A "POLITICAL EXPERT FROM WASHINGTON" TO

SERVE ON THE ORANGE RESPONSE CELL DURING ITS INITIAL TRIAL IN HILEX-8.)

3. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT OUR PRESENT MOMENTUM COULD BE LOST IF WE DO NOT CONTINUE TO EXHIBIT STRONG INTEREST AND PROVIDE SPECIFIC AND TANGIBLE INPUT TO THE PROCEEDINGS. IN THE NEAR TERM, WE SEE TWO CRITICAL EVENTS: (A) THE SEPTEMBER 6-7, 1977, MEETING OF THE HIGH LEVEL EXERCISE PLANNING GROUP (HLEPG) FOR HILEX-8 AND (B) THE SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 7, 1977, MEETING OF THE CENTRAL PLANNING TEAM (CPT) FOR WINTEX/CIMEX 79. THE HLEPG, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO MEET 2 OR 3 TIMES MORE PRIOR TO THE PLAY OF HILEX-8, IS COMPOSED OF NATIONAL EXPERTS FROM CAPITALS. THESE "HIGH LEVEL" EXPERTS HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES/COMPROMISES TO PROPOSED SCENARIOS AND INCIDENT LISTS. THEY ALSO ENSURE THAT THE SCENARIOS AND INCIDENT LISTS RESULTING FROM THESE MEETINGS ARE CONSTRUCTED TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE EXERCISE. IT IS IN THESE MEETINGS THAT THE BASIC FRAMEWORK OF THE EXERCISE IS HAMMERED OUT AND KEY DECISIONS TAKEN ON WHICH ULTIMATE SUCCESS OR FAILURE WILL TURN.

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4. THE NOTABLE ABSENCE OF US EXPERTS FROM WASHINGTON AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE HLEPG IN MAY 1977 WAS COMMENTED UPON BY SEVERAL DELEGATIONS, ALBEIT IN A FRIENDLY WAY. WE THEREFORE CONSIDER APPROPRIATE NATIONAL REPRESENTATION CONFIDENTIAL

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AT FUTURE HLEPG MEETINGS AND AT THE SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER CPT MEETING TO BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE. WITH RESPECT TO ATTENDANCE AT THE CPT MEETING -- WHICH IS A NEW REQUIREMENT -- WE SEE SHAPE'S REQUEST FOR POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AS ESPECIALLY JUSTIFIED, IN VIEW OF (A) THE PLANNED EXPANSION OF CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION ON THE USE OF CIVIL RESOURCES, (B) THE TESTING OF THE RAPID REINFORCEMENT CONCEPT, AND (C) THE INTEREST EXPRESSED BY THE ALLIES AFTER WINTEX 77 IN EXERTING MORE CONTROL OVER THE POLITICAL CONTENT OF WINTEX SCENARIOS.

5. WE BELIEVE THAT ALLIED PERCEPTIONS OF INCONSISTENT SIGNALS AS TO THE DEPTH OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE EXERCISE PROGRAM ONLY SERVE TO ENCOURAGE FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO (A) SEVERELY CURTAIL THE EXERCISE SCHEDULE OR (B) ESTABLISH A PRECEDENT FOR SELECTIVE PARTICIPATION BY NATIONS (THE CANADIANS CAME VERY CLOSE TO OPTING OUT COMPLETELY WHEN THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HILEX-8 WERE BEING CONFIRMED). IN EITHER CASE, THE IMPACT ON THE EXERCISE PROGRAM WOULD BE DEBILITATING.

6. IN SUM, WE BELIEVE THAT THE CURRENT EXERCISE PROGRAM

IS BY AND LARGE A CREATURE OF US INTERVENTION AND INSIST-
ENCE. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT UNLESS WE SUPPORT EXERCISES
DURING THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION STAGES AS ENTHUSIASTI-
CALLY AS WE SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF AN EXERCISE PROGRAM IN
THE ABSTRACT, THE EXERCISE PROGRAM WILL INEVITABLY SUFFER.
IN OUR VIEW, THE MOST IMMEDIATE NEED IS TO ENGAGE A
WASHINGTON DELEGATION, COMPOSED OF REPS FROM STATE, DEFENSE,
AND FPA, IN THE UPCOMING HLEPG AND CPT MEETINGS, AS A
VISIBLE AND MEANINGFUL DEMONSTRATION OF CONTINUED INTEREST
AND SUPPORT.

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7. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON COMMENT/GUIDANCE.

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